

Submitter: Robinson Foster
On Behalf Of: Climate Rail Alliance
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On
Capital Construction
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1601

Regarding SB 1601:

Do not cut \$20M from the Transportation Operating Fund used for matching critical funding for Cascades Service from Portland to Eugene.

And do not cut \$42M from the Connect Oregon program, used for Rail improvement projects.

For every \$20 Oregon spends improving rails to move people and freight, we receive up to \$80 from the federal government.

Defunding investments in rail won't reallocate those federal dollars: they'll go toward rail projects in other states.

In short, Oregon will be leaving money on the table, all while hurting commuters, tourism, a vital link in the transportation network for the 1 in 3 Oregonians who don't drive, and an essential transportation choice for those who do.

Furthermore, I submitted without any reply from any legislators the following outline of a plan to create a transportation system that will likely pay for itself, in competition with the highway and air modes:

<https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2023I1/Downloads/CommitteeMeetingDocument/286280>

With the proposed cuts in SB 1601, why eliminate the only competition for the highway mode to prop up the failing highway mode when rail and transit can and should be so much better organized and operated?